

EASTERN MONTANA FIRE ZONE



AVIATION OPERATION PLAN 2006

Bureau of Land Management
Fire and Aviation Management
Miles City Field Office
North and South Dakota Field Offices

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1. Administration

1.1. Purpose

The purpose of this plan is to provide guidance specific to Eastern Montana Fire Zone air operations. The content of this plan is considered zone policy and is supplemental to the Montana State Aviation Plan and BLM National Aviation Plan. This plan has been developed to provide direction at the local level to ensure Eastern MT Fire Zone employees understand the scope of aviation services available and to familiarize them with policies, procedures, and responsibilities to be followed within the program.

1.2. Objectives

The Eastern MT Fire Zone aviation program provides aviation management expertise to ensure the safe and efficient use of all aircraft missions within jurisdiction of the Miles City, Billings and North and South Dakota Field Offices. This goal will only be accomplished through proper risk assessment, planning, and management.

1.3. Scope

Typically, the Eastern MT Fire Zone has a high aviation workload. Aircraft are involved in nearly all aspects of land management. The primary air-related projects are fire detection and suppression, including helicopter operations, aerial reconnaissance, air tactical supervision, retardant delivery, and smokejumping. Non-fire uses include personnel transport, wild horse flights and gathers, range and wildlife surveys, wilderness study area flights, administrative flights, and search and rescue missions. Most air operations are conducted over rugged terrain at altitudes ranging from 2500 feet to 9000 feet. Climatic conditions range from hot, dry, and windy in summer to heavy snowfall and cold temperatures in the winter. Travel to some areas is limited to aircraft only.

1.4. Authority

The authority for this plan is contained in the BLM 9400 Manual. This plan supplements but does not replace policy, procedures, and guidance outlined in the U.S. Department of Interior (DOI)- National Business Center- Aviation Management Directorate(AMD) 350-354 Departmental Manual (DMs) and Operational Procedures Memoranda (OPMs) as well as associated handbooks and guides and procedures contained in the following plans, handbooks or guides are incorporated by reference:

- Mobilization Guides (National and Northern Rockies)
- Montana/Dakotas BLM Aviation Management Plan
- BLM National Aviation Plan
- Miles City Interagency Dispatch Plans
- Interagency Airspace Coordination Guide (IACG)
- Interagency Standards for Fire and Aviation (Red Book)
- Interagency Helicopter Operations Guide (IHOG)
- Interagency Aerial Ignition Guide (IAIG)
- Wild Horse and Burro Aviation Operations Guide
- Interagency Single Engine Air Tanker Guide (ISOG)
- Aerial Supervision Module Operations Guide
- Interagency Air Tactical Group Supervision Guide

Interagency Lead Plane Operations Guide
Interagency Tanker Base Guide
Interagency Smoke Jumpers Pilots Operations Guide
Military Use Handbook (Chapter 70)
Interagency Aviation Transport of Hazardous Materials Handbook
Aviation Incident/Accident Response Guide
Title 14 Code of Federal Regulations (CFRs) Federal Aviation Regulations

The Unit Aviation Manager shall maintain a current inventory of the above reference materials and ensure that aircraft managers and users are kept apprised of changes and needed information pertinent to the missions performed.

1.5. Responsibility

National and State responsibilities are outlined in the Montana/Dakota Aviation Management Plan. The Field Office Manager has the overall responsibility for all aviation operations within their respective jurisdictions. Operational responsibility is delegated to the Zone Fire Management Officer (FMO) or Designee.

Miles City Field Office Manager – Dave McInay
South Dakota Field Office Manager – Marian Atkins
North Dakota Field Office Manager – Lonny Bagley
Eastern MT Fire Zone Fire Management Officer – David Overcast
EMFZ Assistant Fire Management Officer/Planning – Eric Lepisto
EMFZ Assistant Fire Management Officer/Operations- Vacant
Eastern MT Fire Zone Duty Officer – as assigned
Eastern MT Fire Zone Unit Aviation Manager - Greg Loper
Zone Dispatch Center Manager - Gloria Gunther
Zone Aviation Dispatcher – as assigned

Unless designated, no other personnel are authorized in the procurement, contracting, or assigning charges to any aircraft used for government business.

2. Personnel Duties and Responsibilities

2.1. Field Office Managers

The Field Office Managers are responsible for all aviation activities within their respective jurisdiction. The Miles City, South Dakota, and North Dakota Field Office Managers have delegated this responsibility to the Zone Fire Management Officer.

2.2 Zone Fire Management Officer (FMO)

The Eastern MT Fire Zone Fire Management Officer establishes overall work and program objectives for the Eastern MT Fire Zone Fire and Aviation Management. The FMO has delegated aviation program oversight to the Unit Aviation Manager.

2.3. Zone Assistant Fire Management Officers (AFMO)

The Eastern MT Fire Zone Assistant Fire Management Officers assist the Zone Fire

Management Officer in the overall work and program objectives for the Eastern MT Fire Zone. In the absence of the Zone Fire Management Officer, the Zone Assistant Fire Management Officer/Planning or Operations assumes the duties of the Zone Fire Management Officer.

2.4. Unit Aviation Manager (UAM)

The Unit Aviation Manager serves as the focal point for the Eastern MT Fire Zone aviation program. The UAM provides technical and management direction, guidance, and leadership in the use of aviation resources in support of land management programs. The Unit Aviation Manager is responsible for monitoring and oversight of all aviation operations, facilities, and associated services within the Eastern MT Fire Zone.

Duties and responsibilities include:

Ensures that the Eastern MT Fire Zone (EMFZ) complies with DOI, Bureau, and Agency policy and regulations.

Manages DOI-AMD aviation training program; arranging for and/or scheduling training for all users, dispatchers, and other personnel within the EMFZ in coordination with the EMFZ Training Officer.

Authorizes, oversees and assists users in completing project aviation safety plans.

Oversees the processing of flight payment documents.

Serves as Primary Project Inspector on all exclusive use and ARA/CWN aircraft contracts within the EMFZ.

Ensures reconciliation of AMD detail of charges- flight cost summaries.

Ensures that all vendors, aircraft and pilots are properly carded for the missions to be flown.

Supervises the EMFZ SEAT Managers and Fire Helicopter Crew Supervisor.

Supervises detailer aviation personnel.

Reviews and investigates all SAFECOM reports and provides immediate follow-up and guidance where warranted.

Ensures coordination with Department of Defense (DOD) and Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) on airspace issues.

Reviews and updates the EMFZ Aviation Plan on an annual basis and ensures the Helicopter, SEAT, Air Tactical and Smokejumper Operations Plan Supplements are reviewed and updated by January 15th.

Manages aviation facility leases and memorandums of understanding.

Ensures that Miles City Interagency Dispatch Center (MCC) implements emergency mishap procedures when necessary and assists with the Aviation Incident/Accident Response Plan when appropriate.

Ensures that flight following procedures are set up and clearly understood by pilots, flight managers, users, dispatchers who are performing flight following.

Ensures initial and daily briefings are provided to flight crews and ensures logistical support.

Ensures the EMFZ maintains an updated an aviation hazard map for the zone.

Performs on site inspections of EMFZ home base aircraft operations facilities; ensures national standards are being met and addresses homeland security issues.

Compiles an annual aviation statistical summary for EMFZ.

2.5. EMFZ Fire Helicopter Crew Supervisor

The Fire Helicopter Crew Supervisor is responsible for all areas relating to the exclusive use contract for the type III helicopter and functions as the Field Project Inspector for the contract. The EMFZ Fire Helicopter Crew Supervisor also provides assistance as requested by the UAM for all helicopter activities, both fire and non-fire, within the EMFZ.

2.6. EMFZ Assistant Fire Helicopter Crew Supervisor

In the absence of the Fire Helicopter Crew Supervisor, the Assistant Fire Helicopter Crew Supervisor will assume all of the Crew Supervisor's operational and contractual duties and responsibilities.

2.7. EMFZ Fire Helicopter Lead Crew

In the absence of the Fire Helicopter Crew Supervisor and the Assistant Fire Helicopter Crew Supervisor, the Fire Helicopter Lead Crew will assume all of the Crew Supervisor and Assistant's operational and contractual duties and responsibilities.

2.8. EMFZ Air Base Manager

The Air Base Manager (ABM) is responsible for all areas relating to the exclusive use or call when needed contract (SEATs) located at the Miles City Airport or alternate bases. The EMFZ ABM functions as the Field Project Inspector for the SEAT aircraft contracts. The ABM also provides assistance, oversight, and monitoring for other SEAT activities assigned to EMFZ. The Air Base Manager shall be the airport onsite point of contact for all tactical, logistical, procurement, and intelligence information within the zone. The zone exclusive use helitack crew and ATGS shall function independently as indicated in the zone table of organization, but shall work together as a team with the Air Base Manager and other Air Base personnel.

2.9. EMFZ SEAT Manager

The EMFZ SEAT Manager is an assistant to the EMFZ ABM. In the absence of the Air Base Manager, the SEAT Manager will assume the contractual and operational duties of the Air Base Manager.

2.10. EMFZ Air Tactical Group Supervisor (ATGS)

The EMFZ ATGS is the Field Project Inspector for the exclusive use contract air tactical platform aircraft as well as performing the duties of aerial detection, fire size up and control of other tactical aircraft on scene of an incident.

2.11. Detailer Personnel

When fire activity increases, the EMFZ utilizes aviation detailer personnel as needed (ie: Helicopter Managers, SEAT Managers, Fixed Wing Base Managers, Air Support Group Supervisors, Air Tactical Group Supervisors). These personnel are directly supervised by the Unit Aviation Manager.

2.12. Miles City Interagency Dispatch Center (MCC) Center Manager

The Center Manager oversees the planning, scheduling, flight following, and closeout flight activities conducted within the EMFZ.

2.13. Aircraft Dispatcher

All aircraft flights, both fixed-wing and rotor wing, are ordered and documented through the Aircraft Dispatcher at the MCC. The Aircraft Dispatcher is key to the success of any flight, during the planning and flight stages.

Duties and responsibilities include:

Applies aviation management policy and regulations related to aircraft dispatchers.

Assists aircraft users with completion of Aircraft Flight Requests (BLM Form 9400-1a), as needed, and implementation of special use plans.

Processes aircraft resource orders for fire flights through standard dispatch procedures, this includes performing best value cost analysis.

Maintains daily communication with the SEAT Managers, Helicopter Managers, Smokejumpers, the Air Tactical Group Supervisors within the zone and GACC to determine availability.

Reviews all SAFECOM reports and provides the Aviation Manager with immediate information, follow up, and support where warranted.

Coordinates airspace by initiating Temporary Flight Restrictions (TFRs) when appropriate and conducts daily or periodic deconfliction with DOD for airspace within EMFZ.

Maintains and updates local aviation hazard map for the zone.

Will flight follow and track all aircraft (fire, logistical, and special use) within the EMFZ and span of control of MCC.

Initiates the Airspace Boundary Checklist as outlined in the Airspace Boundary Plan of the National Aviation Plan.

2.14. Table of Organization

To determine supervisory roles, refer to the EMFZ table of organization (TO) chart located at MCC.

3. Aircraft Acquisition/Flight Request

3.1. Policy/Procedure

All special use flights will require at least one qualified Flight Manager/Chief of Party to be assigned on board all aircraft as required by Department Manuals. A special use flight is basically categorized as any flight other than a point to point flight. All contract aircraft and pilots shall be currently Interagency carded. All helicopter operations within the zone shall be categorized as special use flights and adhere to the Interagency Helicopter Operations Guide (IHOG).

Anyone may refuse or curtail a flight when an unsafe condition is perceived. In all cases, the pilot has responsibility for safety of the aircraft.

In the event of an imminent threat to human life, aviation policy may be deviated from as authorized and documented by the applicable Incident Commander or Field Office Manager or designee as per chapter 1, section C-1 and appendix 06-1 of the Interagency Standards for Fire and Aviation Operations.

A Project Aviation Safety Plan (PASP) shall be submitted to the Unit Aviation Manager for review and approval prior to all non-tactical flights. Program Manager approval is required to ensure funding as well as signatures and approval from the respective Field Office Manager.

For initial attack operations on the Custer National Forest under the MT Cooperative Fire Protection Agreement, aircraft are under operational control of the EMFZ adhering to DOI and BLM aviation policy. Non-fire aircraft operating on the Custer National Forest (CNF) shall adhere to USDA-Forest Service aviation policy and is administrated by the CNF. Tactical aircraft operations within the boundaries of the South Dakota Field Office for mission flights with the exception of Harding County are under the operational control of the South Dakota Interagency Suppression Organization and Northern Great Plains Dispatch. Aircraft operating within the boundaries of the North Dakota Field Office for tactical mission flights are under the operational control of local municipal fire departments and North Dakota Dispatch. Non-tactical resource type flight activity for both the North and South Dakota Field Offices is administrated by the EMFZ.

Non-fire fixed wing operations below 500 feet above ground level are not approved. For low and slow type flights, a helicopter shall be utilized.

The EMFZ has no operational control or oversight responsibility for end-product type contracts utilizing aircraft or aircraft procured by other entities as per OPM 06-35.

3.2. Pre-flight Planning

All non-tactical resource type flights shall provide MCC a minimum of three (3) working days notification to allow the most suitable and economical aircraft be obtained, ensure adequate time to complete the Project Aviation Safety Plan (PASP), and allow the Aircraft Dispatcher adequate time to deconflict airspace.

3.3. Aviation Flight Request/Schedule –BLM Form 9400-1A

The Aviation Dispatcher is responsible for the initiating and processing of all Aircraft Flight Request/Schedule BLM Form 9400-1A and the scheduling of an aircraft utilized within the Zone. All requests, for contracting or use of aircraft will be coordinated through the Unit Aviation Manager or designee.

3.4. Cooperator Aircraft

The use of military or state aircraft shall be covered by a current Letter of Approval or Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). The Unit Aviation Manager shall be promptly notified prior to utilization. Montana Department of Natural Resources & Conservation (MT DNRC) aircraft shall flight follow with MCC and adhere to MT DNRC 1500 Manual – Aviation Management policy. MCC shall document public aircraft orders and contractor availability in accordance with procurement laws.

3.5. Interagency Flights

Joint agency flights or other Field Offices are encouraged and often more economical than individual flights. Such a request should be made through the Unit Aviation Manager with BLM Form 9400-1A. Non-federal passengers shall be working within an existing MOU between agencies. For non-fire flights these passengers shall also be documented in the PASP. All aircraft shall be federal interagency approved.

3.6. OAS 23's/FS122's (Fire and Non-Fire)

A DOI- Aircraft Use Report (OAS-23) or Forest Service- Flight Use Report (FS122) is to be completed for all flights or flight segments. It will be the responsibility of the Flight Manager or Field Project Inspector to review the form and initial all line entry items. The Unit Aviation Manager or designee will review and authorize all flight payment documents to ensure proper coding and processing. On all exclusive use aircraft contracts the Primary Project Inspector /Unit Aviation Manager or designee will sign the OAS-23s in the lower right block at least on the 1st and 16th of the month for the duration of the contract period utilizing the electronic template. On CWN/ARA aircraft contracts, 2 different air crew members shall initial the line items and authorize payment. The UAM shall receive copies of all flight invoices promptly. The Unit Aviation Manager will dispense and file OAS-23s by flight invoice tracking number. Non- tactical resource mission flights shall have the project name and location indicated on all flight invoices.

4. Aviation User Training Program

4.1. Policy/Currency

The AMD Operational Procedures Memorandum (OPM) No. 06-04 mandates that all DOI special use aircraft users must receive Basic Aircraft Safety (B-3) prior to the initial mission performed. OPM 06-04 also states that these aircraft users must maintain currency with B-3 training every 3 years. Line Managers and Field Office Managers are also required to receive initial DOI aviation policy training and maintain 3 year currency. The Unit Aviation Manager will ensure that these training requirements are met and coordinate an aviation user training record. On-line modules are available for currency on the OAS web site. (<http://iat.nifc.gov>)

5. Aviation Dispatching

5.1. Policy

All tactical, logistical, and non-fire aircraft movement will be coordinated with the Unit Aviation Manager and will be monitored by MCC. Tactical aircraft may be requested or strategically moved by an Area or National MAC Group, the Zone FMO, AFMO, Aviation Manager, or Duty Officer. All national resource aircraft entering and exiting the zone will be coordinated and tracked by the Northern Rockies Aviation desk.

6. Communications/Frequencies

6.1. Policy

All aircraft operated within the EMFZ jurisdiction shall maintain communications at all times. An inoperable radio shall terminate the flight as soon as practical. MCC shall be contacted promptly by phone once the aircraft is on the ground.

6.2. Zone Tactical FM Frequencies

Refer to EMFZ Aviation Orientation Guide for EMFZ tactical FM frequencies.

6.3. National Flight Following Frequency

Use for all aircraft within EMFZ. RX and TX 168.650
(Not for tactical use)

DNRC Home Creek RX 151.175 and TX 151.475 tone 192.8
Use for helicopter flights below 1000 above ground level (AGL) in the Ashland Ranger District area.

6.4. Air Guard Emergency Frequency

Use during in-flight emergencies.
Use in the backup event to contact aircraft.

RX and TX 168.625 tone 110.9

6.5 National Air Tanker Ramp Frequency

VHF-AM use for all SEAT ramp operations within the EMFZ.

RX and TX 123.975

6.6. Helicopter Deck Frequency

Use for all helicopter deck operations within the zone unless assigned alternate.

RX and TX 123.975

6.7 Air to Ground/Air to Air

Zone tactical VHF-FM Air to Ground and zone tactical VHF-AM (Victor) Air-to-Air frequencies are renewed annually. Refer to the zone frequency map in the Montana/Dakotas Aviation Orientation Guide.

7. Local Aviation Facilities

7.1. Fixed Wing Airports

Bold print indicates existing Air Tanker reload bases

Airport	Fuel	Runway	Length	Elevation	Latitude	Longitude
Baker	100 LL Jet A	Asphalt	4900x75	4482	46 21.86'	104 15.57'
Buffalo, SD	100LL	Asphalt	3900x60	2889	45 34.83'	103 31.78'
Billings	100 LL Jet A	Asphalt	10520x75	3720	45 48.50	108 32.63'
Bridger	None	Asphalt	3400x42	3720	45 17.50'	108 55.54'
Broadus	none	Asphalt	4400x75	3280	45 28.21'	105 27.13'
Circle	100 LL	Asphalt	4100x75	2426	47 25.00'	105 33.03'
Cody	100 LL Jet A	Asphalt	8276x756	5098	44 31.21'	109 01.43'

Airport	Fuel	Runway	Length	Elevation	Latitude	Longitude
Colstrip	100 LL	Asphalt	5100x75	3425	45 51.17'	106 42.56'
Culbertson	100 LL	Asphalt	3800x60	1953	48 09.20'	104 30.23'
Ekalaka	None	Asphalt	3800x75	3503	45 523.68'	104 32.25'
Forsyth	None	Asphalt	4799x75	2727	46 16.27'	106 37.44'
Gillette	100 LL Jet A	Asphalt	7500x150	4363	44 20.93'	105 32.36'
Glasgow	100 LL Jet A	Asphalt	4999x100	2294	48 12.75'	106 36.89'
Glendive	100 LL Jet A	Asphalt	5704x100	2456	47 08.32'	104 48.43'
Hardin	None	Asphalt	3542x60	2911	45 43.50'	107 36.04'
Jordan	None	Asphalt	4300x75	2662	47 20.00'	106 56.04'
Laurel	100 LL	Asphalt	3775x50	3515	45 42.19'	108 45.67'
Lewistown	100 LL Jet A	Asphalt	5600x100	4167	47 02.95'	109 28.00'
Miles City	100 LL Jet A	Asphalt	5680x100	2628	46 25.68'	105 53.18'
Red Lodge	100 LL	Asphalt	4000x75	5763	45 11.25'	109 16.04'
Roundup	100 LL	Asphalt	5100x75	3485	46 28.41'	108 33.46'
Sheridan	100 LL Jet A	Asphalt	8300x100	4024	44 46.15'	106 58.82'
Sidney	100 LL Jet A	Asphalt	5703x100	1984	47 42.41'	104 11.55'
Terry	None	Asphalt	4300x75	2260	46 46.75'	105 18.30'
Dickinson	100 LL Jet A	Asphalt	6400x100	2592	46 47.84	102 48.12
Belle Fourche	100 LL Jet A	Asphalt	4500x60	3190	44 44.05	103 51.72
Spearfish	100 LL Jet A	Asphalt	3900x150	3931	44-28.82	103-46.98

Airport	Fuel	Runway	Length	Elevation	Latitude	Longitude
Rapid City	100 LL Jet A	Asphalt	8701x150	3204	44-02.72	103-03.44

7.2. Helibases

Location	Pad Condition	Elevation	Latitude	Longitude
Ashland	Concrete	3023	45 35.6'	106 15.19'
Fort Howes	Concrete	3345	45 18.02'	106 09.15'
Miles City Airport	Concrete	2628	46 25.68'	105 53.18'
Camp Crook	Grass	2800	45 32.40'	103 59.30'
Bridger	Grass	3220	45 17.50'	108 55.54'
Jordan	Grass	2662	47 20.0'	106 56.04'
Ekalaka	Asphalt	3503	45 52.68'	10104 32.25'

Public airports may be used as a temporary helibase. Unimproved helispots shall adhere to IHOG specifications. All private land sites shall obtain prior permission from the owner.

8. Airspace Coordination

8.1 Responsibility

The MCC has the responsibility for deconflicting all special use airspace prior to all aviation flight operations.

8.2. Military Airspace

MCC shall contact the appropriate military scheduler to deconflict the applicable Military Operations Area or Military Training Route.

8.3. TFR's

MCC shall follow the Interagency Airspace Coordination Guide, complete the Temporary Flight Restriction form and fax to the appropriate Geographic Area Coordination Center

(GACC), Aviation Desk who then contacts the FAA. Prior to ordering, authorization is required by the Duty Officer or UAM.

8.4. Boundary Plan

The EMFZ shall adhere to the Airspace Boundary Plan as outlined in the BLM National Aviation Plan and the MT/Dakotas Aviation Orientation Guide.

9. Flight Classification

9.1. Point to Point Flights

Point-to-Point Flights are multiple yearly occurrences. The Montana State Director, Field Office Managers, or Field Project Managers can request these flights. MCC also coordinates overhead transport flights in support of wild-land fire incidents. These flights will be termed as scheduled point to point flights and require only a standard FAA flight plan be filed by the pilot. The aircraft request (BLM Form 9400-1A) will be completed and the flight will be coordinated with the Unit Aviation Manager. Senior Executive Service flights (SES) are administrated by the Mt/Dakotas State Aviation Manager.

9.2. Wildfire Detection Flights

Wildfire Detection Flights occur throughout the fire season. These are non point-to- point mission flights, conducted at an elevation of above 500' above ground level (AGL). These flights will be termed Aerial Reconnaissance. Only Flight Manager qualified observers will be used. Prior to each flight, the Flight Manager shall receive a route map of the intended route from the Aviation Dispatcher.

9.3. Helitack Flights

Helitack Flights occur throughout the fire season. Flights include initial attack, detection, support flights, personnel transport, sling loads, water bucket work, and aerial firing. Flights are categorized as mission flights and may be conducted at any altitude. MCC will monitor these flights. The EMFZ Helicopter Operations Supplement contains additional information.

9.4 SEAT Flights

Single Engine Air Tanker (SEAT) flights occur throughout the fire season. Flights include initial attack retardant delivery, proficiency flights and ferrying flights and are tactical mission flights that shall be performed no lower than 60 feet AGL. MCC will monitor these flights. The EMFZ SEAT Operations Supplement contains additional information.

9.4. Air Attack Flights

Air Attack flights occur throughout the fire season. Only qualified Air Tactical Group Supervisors (ATGS) shall perform these missions. The EMFZ shall adhere to Aerial Supervision policy as outlined in the Interagency Standards for Fire and Aviation Operations. Flights are categorized as tactical missions and shall be conducted no lower than 500 feet AGL. The EMFZ Air Tactical Operations Supplement contains additional information.

9.5. Smokejumper Flights

Smokejumper Flights occur throughout the fire season. These multi engine fixed wing flights include aerial delivery of fire fighters and cargo. These flights are tactical mission flights and may be conducted at any altitude. MCC will monitor these flights. With increased fire activity, smokejumper personnel and aircraft may pre-position at the Miles City Air Base as requested by the Duty Officer. The EMFZ Smokejumper Operations Supplement contains additional information.

9.6. Heavy Air Tanker Flights

Heavy Airtanker Flights occur throughout the fire season. These multi engine fixed wing flights include initial and extended attack retardant delivery missions, proficiency drops, and ferry flights. These are tactical mission flights and can be flown at any altitude. MCC will monitor these flights.

9.7. Lead Plane – Aerial Supervision Module Flights

Lead Plane-Aerial Supervision Module (ASM) Flights occur throughout the fire season. These fixed wing flights are generally in conjunction with heavy airtanker retardant drops. ASMs may also dual function as a lead plane and ATGS. These are tactical mission flights and may be flown at any altitude. MCC will monitor these flights.

9.8. Emergency Stabilization & Rehabilitation Flights

Emergency Stabilization and Rehabilitation (ESR) Flights are a multiple yearly occurrence depending on fire severity and environmental concerns. These flights are generally rotor wing aircraft utilized in support of ground operations. The Project Manager shall ensure that an aviation project safety plan and flight request is submitted to MCC for review and approval with signatures prior to any flights associated with the project.

9.9. Aerial Ignition Flights

Aerial Ignition Flights are a multiple yearly occurrence. Flights are conducted for prescribed burn aerial ignition and wildfire burnout operations within the Eastern MT Fire Zone. Operations shall adhere to the IHOG and the Interagency Aerial Ignition Guide. The Prescribed Fire Manager shall ensure that the aviation safety portion of the prescribed burn plan is submitted to the Unit Aviation Manager for approval and signatures prior to the start of the prescribed burn operation.

9.10. Wildlife Survey Flights

Wildlife Survey flights occur throughout the year. These flights will be assigned a qualified Flight Manager as required for special use flights. The resource person utilizing the aircraft will ensure that a project aviation safety plan and flight request be submitted to the Unit Aviation Manager or designee prior to the flight. MCC will monitor these flights.

9.11. Wild Horse Gathering and Monitoring Flights

Wild Horse Gathering and Monitoring Flights occur throughout the year. These special use flights occur on and around the Pryor Mountain area wild horse range. The assigned

aircraft will be managed by an IHOG qualified Helicopter Manager. Prior to any flight, the Wild Horse Program Manager shall ensure that a project aviation safety plan and flight request are submitted to MCC for approval and signatures.

9.12. Weed Survey/Beetle Distribution Flights

Weed Survey and Beetle Distribution Flights occur throughout the year. These rotor-wing flights may occur on the federal, state, and private lands within the EMFZ. Flights may require federal and nonfederal flight crewmembers that are required to have aviation safety training (B-3) and follow IHOG standards. The BLM shall exercise full operational and contractual control of the project. The assigned aircraft will be managed by an IHOG qualified Helicopter Manager. Prior to any flight, a project aviation safety plan and flight request will be submitted to MCC for approval and signatures. For aircraft procured by local municipalities, the EMFZ shall have no operational control or oversight responsibility as an end-product contract per section 3.1.

9.14. Land Survey Flights

Land Survey Flights are occasionally required for land transfers and acquisitions. These flights may occur over federal, state and private lands. A qualified Flight Manager will manage the assigned aircraft. Prior to any flight, the program lead of the project will submit a project aviation safety plan to MCC.

9.15. Search and Rescue Flights

Search and Rescue Flights occur on a case-by-case basis. Only the on call Duty Officer may authorize this type of flight after an official request from the appropriate municipal authorities and a management charge code is obtained. The appropriate Field Office Manager shall be promptly notified. These flights shall be classified as tactical mission flights.

9.16. Law Enforcement/Range Flights

Trespass (both livestock and structures) as well as paleontology theft survey flights may be an annual event and occur on a case-by-case basis. To facilitate a timely response, missions flown utilizing exclusive use contract aircraft may be categorized as a tactical mission and do not require a PASP but shall be documented on the 9400-1A form. Agency tactical law enforcement flights are unauthorized without National and State Office approval. Local municipality tactical law enforcement flights are unauthorized without the aircraft being released from contract to that municipality and authorized by both the Duty Officer and the appropriate Field Manager.

10. Flight Following

10.1. Policy

All aircraft flights originating or coming into Eastern Montana Fire Zone are required to be flight followed by MCC. MCC will coordinate all flight following and hand off procedures within the zone to another zone dispatcher, Helicopter or SEAT Manager located at remote

bases. (Refer to the Aircraft Dispatcher SOPs)

10.2. Equipment

Any interagency aircraft operating within the Zone will be equipped with a radio capable of operating on all Zone frequencies to include the National Flight Following frequency. See the Communications Procedures section of this plan. Radios, headsets, Flight Manager kits, air recon kits, PPE and other equipment are available through MCC.

10.3. Check-In Procedures

Radio check-ins are to be made prior to taxi and 5 minutes before landing in accordance with sterile cockpit policy. Upon departure as soon as the aircraft is clear of the traffic area, contact MCC. Inform MCC of destination, heading, number of personnel on board, hours of fuel and ETA. During all flights a position check will be conducted every 15 minutes, providing MCC with the aircraft's present heading off the aircraft navigational system. Check-ins will also include present latitude and longitude of the aircraft given in degrees and minutes only. Aircraft with automated flight following may request "AFF". Check-in information is to be logged by MCC in the aviation radio log. It will be the Flight Manager's and MCC's responsibility to ensure that actual check-ins are being made.

10.4. Flight Plans

Flight following for all point-to-point flights can be accomplished by filing a FAA Visual Flight Rules (VFR) or Instrument Flight Rules (IFR) flight plan that specifically requests FAA flight following. The completed aircraft request and authorization (BLM Form 9400-1A) will also act as a backup flight plan. It is the Flight Managers' responsibility to close out the flight plan upon arrival at the destination and notify MCC.

10.5. Automated Flight Following (AFF)

Aircraft with an AFF receiver may be monitored using the "Web Tracker" program as authorized by MCC. Refer to EMFZ Aviation Orientation Guide or Aircraft Dispatcher SOPs for protocol and more detailed information.

11. Overdue Aircraft Procedures

11.1. Radio Contact

Immediately upon exceeding the regular check-in time the Zone Aviation Dispatcher will attempt radio contact with the aircraft. The Zone Aviation Dispatcher will contact the destination to see if the aircraft has landed. Radio contact will be attempted every five minutes. MCC will reconfirm the last check-in time and location.

11.2. Mishap Response Plan

30 minutes past the last check in and with no response, the dispatcher will initiate the Interagency Mishap Response Plan posted in MCC.

11.3. Names on Radio

Names of accident victims will not be used on the radio.

11.4. Notification

The Field Office Manager (or acting) is the only person who will release information and notify the next of kin of an accident or fatality.

11.5. Critical Incident Management

The EMFZ shall follow the Agency Administrator's Guide to Critical Incident Management, copies are available at MCC.

12. Passenger Authorization

Only passengers essential to the mission performed are authorized aboard government contracted or owned aircraft within the EMFZ. Prior documentation is required for non routine passengers on the BLM Form 9400-1A as reviewed by the UAM and authorized by the Duty Officer.

13. Security

All EMFZ aircraft bases shall have a security assessment completed and a posted security plan in place. See each operational supplement for more detailed information.

14. Aviation Administration Reference

The EMFZ Aviation Program will maintain a current aviation reference library in the Unit Aviation Manager's office to include:

- Departmental Manual, Parts 112,350-354
- NBC-AM Operational Procedures Memoranda (OPMs)
- BLM Manual Section 9400
- FARs Aeronautical Information Manual
- OMB Circular A-76, A-123, A-126
- GSA FPMR 101-37
- AMD, Bureau and Interagency Operational Guides
- Zone Aviation Operational Plans
- Helicopter Operations Supplement
- SEAT Operations Supplement
- Air Tactical Operations Supplement
- Smokeyjumper Operations Supplement
- Montana/Dakotas State Aviation Plan
- National Aviation Plan
- MT DNRC 1500 Manual- Aviation Management

Forest Service 5700 Manual – Aviation Management
Aircraft Identification and Performance Publications
Aviation Technical Assistance Directory
Exclusive Use Helicopter Contract
CWN Helicopter Contract
Exclusive Use SEAT Contract
CWN SEAT Contract
National Bulk Retardant Contract
Aircraft Use Report (OAS 23s)
Aircraft Contract Daily Diaries
Aircraft Contract Performance Evaluations
Aircraft Rental Agreement (ARA)
OAS Source List
Unit Aviation, Incident /Accident Plan
NOAA Sectional Charts
Zone Aerial Hazard Maps
Aviation web sites, ie:
www.oas.gov
www.nifc.gov
www.nts.gov
www.faa.gov
www.aopa.org
www.aviation.blm.gov
<http://airspace.nifc.gov>

15. Aviation Documentation

The Unit Aviation Manager shall coordinate storing aviation flight and administrative records. All documentation should be retained locally per BLM policy. The aviation file system will include:

Project Aviation Safety Plans
Aviation Memorandums of Understanding
Aviation Facility Leases
OAS 23s Yellow Copies
Senior Executive Service (SES) Flights
Completed Aircraft Daily Dairies
OAS Cost Summaries- Detail of Charges
SAFECOMS
Aircraft Best Value Cost Analysis
Aviation Statistical Records
Completed Contract Evaluations
Aviation Incident/Accident Reports
DOI Aviation Training Records
Retardant Purchase Receipts

16. Summary

This plan is specific to the Eastern Montana Fire Zone - Fire and Aviation programs. The Helicopter, SEAT, Air Tactical and Smokejumper operations supplements are supplemental to this plan. This plan is not 100% comprehensive. If additional information or clarification is needed, consult the Unit Aviation Manager, Zone Fire Management Officer, Center Manager, or other appropriate personnel. Any further reference can be reviewed in the Montana/Dakotas BLM Aviation Management Plan and BLM National Aviation Plan.

Progressive and proactive aviation management is the key to ensure safe and efficient air operations in support of wildfire and resource management missions within the Eastern MT Fire Zone.

17. Signatures

Prepared by	_____ Greg Loper Unit Aviation Manager BLM	_____ Date
Reviewed by	_____ David Overcast Zone Fire Management Officer BLM	_____ Date
Approved by	_____ Marian Atkins SD Field Office Manager BLM	_____ Date
Approved by	_____ Lonny Bagley ND Field Office Manager BLM	_____ Date
Approved by	_____ David McInay Miles City Field Office Manager BLM	_____ Date